CLAIMS:

1. A display device which includes a liquid crystal panel having a plurality of pixels, and an illuminating unit for illuminating the liquid crystal panel using a light guiding plate,

wherein the illuminating unit comprises light path changing means for changing, by being brought into contact with or not in contact with the light guiding plate, a light path of propagating light inside the light guiding plate, so as to change intensity of light illuminating the liquid crystal panel.

2. A display device as set forth in claim 1,

wherein the light path changing means comprises a plurality of units, and

wherein the plural units of the light path changing means are brought into contact with or not in contact with the light guiding plate one after another.

3. A display device as set forth in claim 2, wherein the plural units of the light path changing means are brought into contact with or not in contact with the light guiding plate in synchronism with a scanning signal for the liquid crystal panel.

4. A display device as set forth in any one of claims 1 through 3, wherein the light path changing means, which is independently brought into contact with or not in contact with the light guiding plate is individually brought into contact with the light guiding plate so as to illuminate plural pixels of the liquid crystal panel.

5. A display device as set forth in any one of claims 1 through 4, wherein the plural units of the light path changing means, which are disposed parallel to the scanning line for the liquid crystal panel are simultaneously brought into contact with or not in contact with the light guiding plate.

6. A display device as set forth in claim 5, wherein a light incident surface of the light guiding plate is substantially parallel to the scanning line for the liquid crystal panel.

7. A display device as set forth in any one of claims 1 through 6, wherein the light path changing means is brought into contact with the light guiding plate so as to illuminate a region of the liquid crystal panel in which liquid crystal has responded almost completely.

8. A display device as set forth in any one of claims 1 through 7, wherein the light path changing means includes a piezoelectric element which brings the light path changing means into contact or not in contact with the light guiding plate.

9. A display device as set forth in any one of claims 1 through 8, wherein a surface of the light path changing means brought into contact with the light guiding plate comprises organic resin.

10. A display device as set forth in any one of claims 1 through 9,

wherein the light guiding plate includes:

a first layer on which light is incident;

a second layer having a smaller refractive index than the first layer; and

a reflecting means, provided on an opposite surface of a light incident surface of the light guiding plate, for causing propagating light in the first layer to propagate also in the second layer.

11. A display device as set forth in claim 10, wherein the incident light on the first layer is set such that an angle at which the propagating light in the first layer is

incident on the second layer is no less than $\sin^{-1}$ (n2/n1), where n1 is the refractive index of the first layer, and n2 is the refractive index of the second layer.

12. A display device as set forth in any one of claims 1 through 11, comprising a plurality of light emitting elements for emitting light into the light guiding plate.

13. A display device as set forth in claim 12, wherein the light emitting elements emit a plurality of colors.

14. A display device as set forth in claim 12 or 13, wherein the light emitting elements include at least one light emitting diode.